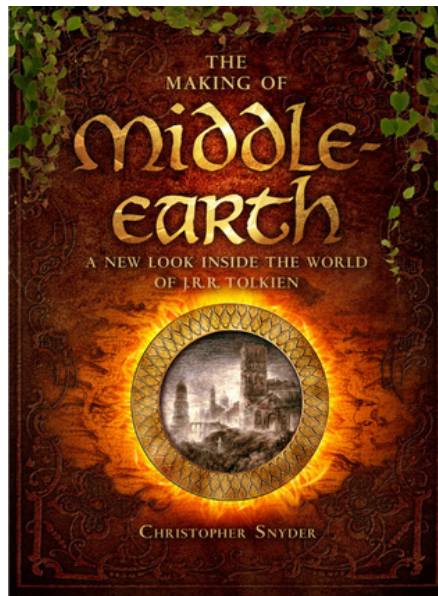




The Making of Middle-Earth: A New Look Inside the World of J.R.R. Tolkien

Christopher A. Snyder

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J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* consistently tops polls as the best-loved literary work of all time. Now medieval scholar and Tolkien expert Christopher Snyder presents the most in-depth exploration yet of Tolkien's source materials for Middle-earth—from the languages, poetry, and mythology of medieval Europe and ancient Greece to the halls of Oxford and the battlefields of World War I. Fueled by the author's passion for all things Tolkien, this richly illustrated book also reveals the surprisingly pervasive influence of Tolkien's timeless fantasies on modern culture.

The Making of Middle-Earth: A New Look Inside the World of J.R.R. Tolkien Details

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From Reader Review The Making of Middle-Earth: A New Look Inside the World of J.R.R. Tolkien for online ebook

Katie says

I just started reading this book tonight and I love it! I'm eager to hear what other Tolkien enthusiasts think of it...

....Im just hoping its not too critical.

Christian says

Especially for a "Tolkien-beginner" a very good entrance to his world. Others will know most of the stuff gathered in here, but it's still a worthwhile and comprehensive reading. The rating is secured by the beautiful layout.

Joe Cowan says

I tend to reserve 5 stars only for books that fill me with a deep sense of awe or wonder or joy. This one met all of those and more. The Lord of the Rings has always been to me a sort of home-in-a-book, so there is certainly a bias in a pre-existing love there. but this book enchanted me from the beginning, starting as a biography of much interest, filled with historical, philosophical, and mythological parallels, and ending with thoughtful sorrow which one may only really come upon when finishing a beloved book, much like Tolkien's works themselves. I cannot recommend this enough, to the curious or already captivated fan.

Libby says

This is a wonderful book in more ways than one. It is an examination of the sources that may have motivated J.R.R. Tolkien as he wrote his wondrous adventures in the history of Middle-Earth. To delve into these sources, it gives a brief biography of Tolkien, his family, the places he lived, his service in WWI and the subjects he taught and loved. It relies very heavily on previously unpublished papers from Tolkien's letters and his unfinished works, as well as interviews with family and friends. It gives succinct accounts of the story lines of the famous essays, novels and short stories. It shows illustrations from many editions of Tolkien's work. Films and music from the books have a chapter to themselves. All of this is well written, easy to follow and informative. But the volume itself is beautiful. It is printed on heavy art paper. Each page is edged in red like a bible or an expensive poetry book. It is bound in expensive feeling stock like a special artistic edition of a great classic. The binding is sturdy and meant for a long shelf life. The profuse illustrations are exquisite, ranging from medieval manuscripts to the Brothers Hildebrandt, John Nash and Alan Lee. The colors are clear and true and the choices of illustration are apt. The end papers and chapter heads are redolent of magic and lore. All told the book is worth its cover price just as an object of art. If you are a lover of beautiful books, this will satisfy your soul. If you are a lover of Tolkien in particular, this NEEDS to be on your shelves. It would be difficult to dislike this book, so spare yourself the trouble; read it and love it, just as I did.

Kris Sellgren says

This analysis of the sources of Tolkien's Middle Earth is for serious Tolkien fans only (like me). I particularly loved the comparisons between Sindarin and Welsh, and learning Quenya is a mix of Finnish and Greek. It does not diminish my pleasure in LOTR to see the origins of Tolkien's inspiration in the Icelandic Poetic Edda or Old English Beowulf. I enjoyed photos of medieval sites which were compared to structures in LOTR, The Hobbit, and the Simarillion.

Elise says

This made for a fun yet educational Saturday read--I felt as if I were a teenager again, spending hours and hours watching every single documentary on every extended edition of The Lord of the Rings films. This book was incredibly well researched and included an in-depth examination of Tolkien's life, his scholarship, and career, followed by the creation of both his published and unpublished works, and then the film and media interpretations.

Not only was this an enlightening read, but it was also an aesthetically pleasing one! The book is beautiful (and the thick, aged-looking paper did just make it that much more enjoyable to read).

Kent Keifer says

I'm a pretty big Tolkien fan so am probably easily satisfied, especially considering there's quite a range of information here for a Tolkien enthusiast. Much of the book investigates the potential inspiration that Tolkien found in Scandinavian mythology and other ancient sources. There's also some Tolkien history and retellings of many of the stories from his books and spin-off movies, memorabilia etc. I enjoyed all of it but some sections were unnecessary since they were just re-descriptions of the books and movies. The best part were the examinations of the possible historical and mythological sources, and I also enjoyed the discussion of how the Lord of the Rings movies differed from the books and the thought behind why they changed some sections. If you're a Tolkien and Middle Earth lover you will definitely find a lot to enjoy here.

Adam Balshan says

4.5 stars [Literary]

A work of art in its physical appearance. Nearly comprehensive in its scope: it synthesizes key information from several other books which analyze Tolkien's works. The reader will enjoy diverse tidbits about Tolkien's life, historical inspirations for his creation, and snippets of ancient languages.

If you had to choose only one book to read about Tolkien's world, this is it.

Michele says

So glad I read this (and now own it)! I learned so so much stuff about Tolkien and the road to LOTR. I read it cover-to-cover, twice! There is a chapter that is a biography of Tolkien's life and another chapter on medieval/late antiquity history and mythology and how Tolkien drew heavily on all of it for his LOTR and related books. Did you know that Tolkien was fluent in both Old and Middle English? And Latin? and some Welsh? I didn't have a full enough appreciation for the man's genius before reading this book. JRR Tolkien was a true scholar!

My only problem with this book is in the layout. I think the three appendices could've been chapters in their own right. I think readers who don't read appendices could miss out on some good information.

Emma says

very interesting but it was more about tolkiens life and I would have liked more information about the world of the books and movies. Also the last 30 or 40 pages were all information on the sources used. I did not read everything in the book. I skipped parts that I thought were boring and as it is basically a biography of tolkiens life you can skip and still understand.

Fr. Ryan Humphries says

A superb scholarly-yet-readable biography of Professor Tolkien and review of his work. Worth your time and worth buying in the beautiful hardbound edition. Top notch!

Emily says

For an academic there won't be much new information here, but it is certainly for the Tolkien and Middle Earth aficionado. Having read Lord of the Rings, the Hobbit, and the minor fictions and essays of Tolkien, I am actually inspired to tackle...once again...doggedly...The Sillmarillion. I didn't understand what Tolkien was trying to *do* with that work, and now I understand that he was trying to reconstruct a unified mythology for Great Britain. Anyone who loves Middle Earth will love Snyder's work. As a note, the book layout itself is very handsome and I can tell there was a lot of thought put in to the making of this text as an aesthetic object.

Marie says

Did I just read a textbook? I think I just read a textbook. The most gorgeous and engaging textbook ever, but a textbook nonetheless.

I saw the beautiful cover of this book and read in the description that there were plenty of pictures, so I

thought I was getting a coffee-table style book, you know? But maaaaaaan.... Christopher Snyder goes IN DEPTH with his book! And there were also a lot a lot (on purpose repeat there) of nice, big, chewy SAT words in there. I was about halfway through the book when I decided to read the author blurb on the back flap and it said that Dr. Snyder teaches Honors seminars on Tolkien at Oxford University. I bet this is the assigned reading. :)

I'm so glad I read this! I learned so many new-to-me facts about Tolkien and the road to LOTR. I definitely enjoyed the entire book. I read it cover-to-cover in one sitting on a snow day. The chapters cover a biography of Tolkien's life and a chapter on medieval history and how Tolkien drew so heavily on it for his LOTR and related books. Did you know that Tolkien was fluent in Middle English? And Old English? And Latin? I did not have a full enough appreciation for the man's genius before reading this book! He was a true scholar. Part of me would really love to sit down and have tea with him and pick his brain; part of me fears, and rightly so, that he'd leave me in the dust intellectually if I tried!

My only beef with the book is in the layout. I feel like the three appendices could've been full chapters in their own right. I think some readers could miss out on some great information if they skip the appendices, and not everyone reads appendices. I'm just nerdy like that.

I loved this book and definitely recommend to all Tolkien and LOTR fans. I gave it 4 of 5 stars only because it's so very dense with information that it might be too much for the casual reader. It's got such gorgeous detail (such as all the pages being printed to resemble aged paper instead of stark white), lots of illustrations and photographs, and is peppered with quotes from Tolkien. Overall, a great read.

Elentarri says

An interesting look at the inspiration behind The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings. The book is also well constructed with numerous illustrations and thick pages.

Brent says

A very nice look at Tolkien, his life and his Legendarium.
